

MYTH 1

Safety belts are uncomfortable and restrict movement.

FACT

A 2005 Transportation Research Board study on commercial drivers' safety belt usage found many drivers do not find wearing safety belts to be uncomfortable or too restrictive of their movements. Once they correctly adjust the seat, lap and shoulder belt, most drivers find that discomfort and restrictive movement can be alleviated.

MYTH 4

It's better to be thrown clear of the wreckage in the event of a crash.

FACT

An occupant of a vehicle is four times as likely to be fatally injured when thrown from the vehicle. In 2004, 168 truck drivers died when they were ejected from their cabs during a crash.

MYTH 7

A large truck will protect you. Safety belts are unnecessary.

FACT

In 2004, 634 drivers of large trucks died in truck crashes and 303 of those truck drivers were not wearing safety belts.

MYTH 2

Wearing a safety belt is a personal decision that doesn't affect anyone else.

FACT

Not wearing a safety belt can certainly affect your family and loved ones. It can also affect other motorists since wearing a safety belt can help you avoid losing control of your truck in a crash. It's the law; Federal regulations require commercial vehicle drivers to buckle up.

MYTH 5

It takes too much time to fasten your safety belt 20 times a day.

FACT

Buckling up takes about three seconds. Even buckling up 20 times a day requires only one minute.

MYTH 8

Safety belts aren't necessary for low-speed driving.

FACT

In a frontal collision occurring at 30 mph, an unbelted person continues to move forward at 30 mph causing him/her to hit the windshield at about 30 mph. This is the same velocity a person falling from the top of a three story building would experience upon impact with the ground.

MYTH 3

Safety belts prevent your escape from a burning or submerged vehicle.

FACT

Safety belts can keep you from being knocked unconscious, improving your chances of escape. Fire or submersion occurs in less than 5% of fatal large truck crashes.

MYTH 6

Good truck drivers don't need to wear safety belts.

FACT

Good drivers usually don't cause collisions, but it's possible that during your career you will be involved in a crash caused by a bad driver, bad weather, mechanical failure, or tire blowout. Wearing a safety belt prevents injuries and fatalities by preventing ejection, and by protecting your head and spinal cord.

MYTH 9

A lap belt offers sufficient protection.

FACT

The lap and shoulder belt design has been proven to hold a driver securely behind the wheel in the event of a crash, greatly increasing the driver's ability to maintain control of the vehicle and minimizing the chance for serious injury or death.

OTHER FACTS TO CONSIDER:

- In 2004, 634 drivers of large trucks died in truck crashes and 303 of those drivers were not wearing safety belts. Of the 168 drivers killed who were ejected from their vehicles, almost 75% were not wearing safety belts.
- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations require commercial motor vehicle drivers to wear safety belts. (49 CFR 392.16)
- 51% of truck-occupant fatalities in large trucks involve a rollover. Rollover in a large truck increases the likelihood of fatality by 30 times. In a rollover, a truck driver is 80% less likely to die when wearing a safety belt.
- About 27,000 large truck occupants suffered nonfatal injuries in crashes; of these, 4,000 were seriously injured.
- 29% of the truck drivers surveyed reported that they had been involved in a truck crash at some point in their career.
- 65% of truck drivers think that safety belt use in large trucks should be required by law.
- 67% of truck drivers killed, who were not wearing a safety belt, were involved in single vehicle crashes.



THE SAFETY BELT PLEDGE

I will wear my safety belt because my well-being greatly affects my family and loved ones. It is my responsibility to maintain control of my vehicle. Using my safety belt is my best chance of remaining in control of my truck in a crash or emergency situation. I will always remember to buckle up.

X _____

Driver Signature

Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Belt Partnership

American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators

American Society of Safety Engineers

American Trucking Associations

Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Great West Casualty Company

National Association of Publicly Funded Truck Driving Schools

NATSO

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

National Private Truck Council

National Safety Council

National Tank Truck Carriers

Network of Employers for Highway Safety

Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association

Property Casualty Insurers Association of America

Truckload Carriers Association, Professional Truck Drivers Institute

Truck Manufacturers Association

www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt

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9 MYTHS ABOUT SAFETY BELTS FOR TRUCK DRIVERS



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration